Deportation

By:
Abdul Jawad Sa
Mayor of Al

Deportation

By:
Abdul Jawad Salih
Mayor of Al-Bireh

It was twelve o'clock at midnight on the 10 th of December, 1973. The commemoration day of Human Rights. The Palestinians were celebrating it their own and special way. Whether they were under Israeli occupation, strangers on their own Land or refugees in their exile, all of them struggled for what is called Human Rights of which they were deprived.

Full of rage, the wind of Palestine over the mountains of Al-Bireh was blowing furiously, roaring in protest, like a crowd of demonstrators against man's subjugation of other men.

The citizens of Al-Bireh, a summer resort sixteen kilometers north of Jerusalem always liked to call their town « the Bride of Palestine » It is really worth this honour. It is not only well-known for its climate as it mounts about ten hills heading the mountainous range of Palestine,which is about one

thousand feet above sea level, but it is famous for its public garden which covers thirty dunums. of a hundred kinds of colourful roses, tulips and cedar trees. It is surrounded by villas built of white, red and yellow stones guarried from the hearts of the surrounding mountains.

After the 1967 war the days and nights of Al-Bireh, as well as those of all the other Palestinian towns spared the 1948occupation, have changed. Instead of celebrating the weddings of its expatriates who flocked to their town from the hot summers of the Arabian Gulf, or attending their yearly folklore dancing and singing ceremonies held by the city council, the serene days and nights of Al-Bireh became dull, quiet and hidden behind the thick walls of the beautiful villas. The nights became the operation room for the abortion of the resistance movement a nightmare for mothers who remained awake, arguing with the unknown that awaited their children, children who became lovers of these nights which provided a cover for their struggle to bring about an end to their people's tragedy, the tragedy which was brought about by yesterday's victims of despotism and today's subjugators of their people.

Life continued but in a different way. Wedding parties,though fewer in number, became a limited family affair, as to express the people's mourning. Construction of houses was stopped by rich people, For the new occupiers started to demolish the buildings which they had built as an investment for

ear- ning a living. Regardless of their protestations that a Fedayee is neither the owner of the house nor the leaser of the building. still they demolished it.

After putting out the lights of the night of the lOth of December and covering myself from the shivering cold of December, I heard a hell of a noise surmounting the raging wind: the noise of armoured cars. Jeeps and cars followed by the steps of the boots had surrounded my home. Once every one of the Israeli soldiers took his position, the door bell rang. The visitor of the late cold hours and pressed the door bell once and never raised it.

« They came », I whispered to my wife shaking her from her sleep.

« Who? » she responded. frightfully

« Who else would come at this late hour but the soldiers of the occupiers? Listen, don't open the door. It seems that they have come to detain Mahir, » I said in a quiet voice which hid the fear of the unknown.

I crawled on my hands and legs like a cat for they could see what was inside if somebody peeped through the windows, which were one meter above the ground. I reached the next room where Mahir, our nineteen years old son was sleeping.

« Mahir... Mahir, » I whispered to him quietly, lightly stroking his cheeks, « the Israelis have come. If you have illegal papers get rid of them immediately, and get dressed. »

« I have nothing to hide Yaba, » he answered indi-

ferently, his beautiful green eyes a little bit red.

The soldiers started knocking fiercely on all the three doors of the villa. They started with their hands and later with their boots. I followed my wife to the third room where the rest of my children were sleeping. They were already awake, fixed to their beds with fear.

« Don't be scared », I whispered hugging each of them, hugging and comforting each in turn, leaving each in turn to be hugged and comforted by their mother.

It was not their first unwelcome visit. In fact they had never been invited to my home. though each time a military governor or a newly appointed officer came to the town to unsuccessfully change the ugly face of occupation, they begged me to offer him a cup of coffee at home. My answer was always the same: only friends enter my home, not occupiers of my land. When one day Palestine is liberated I'll receive you at my home, offering not only a cup of coffee but a meal of a complete roasted lamb.

In fact they entered my home with the unpleasant missions of occupiers. At first these visits started by calling me to an urgent meeting. Sometimes I would be the only Arab at the meeting surrounded by Shen Bet officers. On other times I would find the mayor of the twin city of Ramallah with other «dignitaries » of both cities. The military governor would threaten us individually or collectively with the responsibility for any demonstration which might

take place the next day. At first we used to protest against the way and time of calling these meetings. Then we would deny the responsibility for any political events on the grounds that we were mayors not policemen. One of those « dignitaries » was a collaborator and at the same time the head of the chamber of commerce. He looked like a fat pig without a neck, but dressed elegantly.

« Yes, but you have great influence among the students, you try your best to stop the demonstrations» The collaborator would reiterate his support for the military governor.

Another type of those unwelcome calls was meant to demoralise us, « the locals.» Whenever they caught one or more of the resistance members they would always call us at midnight to show us the caches of weapons and dynamite of the « terrorists.»

« You know,» the military governor would start, « the Israeli intelligence knows everything. By now» while looking at his watch, « the house of Odeh has been demolished.»

The first confrontation with such disastrous news was handled by the Israeli military governor with great pleasure. It was after Karame battle when the Israeli « defence » forces crossed the Jordan River and attacked a Palestinian commando base. They kidnapped every young man they found there regardless of whether he was a fighter or a civilian. One of those was the son of a merchant from our town.

Hasan Darras was an out law. He considered his father as his greatest enemy. With a mediocre mind, he started stealing from his father. Unwanted by his falily, Hasan left the town for Jordan. There, he contacted one of the organizations.

« Look, my father, who crosses the bridge twice a week, is an agent to the Israelis. He makes contacts with other Israeli agents in Amman and hides the information in the water tank in his truck.»

Believing that it is hardly credible that a son would falsely accuse his father of treason, the organization in question arrested the father as an enemy agent and held him for a month during which he passed through a difficult ordeal. The father was later freed after our intervention

Revenge had not yet been achieved. The naughty son, having once « fallen » captive, found a good chance to revenge on his father. He was cooperative with the Israeli interrogators. He admitted immediately that his father used to provide him refuge in his house and supply him and his comrades with food.

The military governor called me one night together with the town's Mukhtar, Mr. Matar Farhoud. He informed us that a decision had been taken to demolish the home of Darras the elder. In fact this was Darras's second house to be demolished by the Israelis. The first time was in 1948 when the Israelis demolished the whole village of Dir Tareef. I started an argument with the military governor, David Bren, a Polish Nazi officer in a new uniform with a Star of David.

«Governor», I said furiously, «what is the crime of the twelve members of the family to be deprived of their home?» My knowledge of the intimate relations of the son and the family not only made me mad, but my usual quiet way of conversing left me. «Look governor,» I shouted, «the father had announced in the local newspapers, before you were invited to the occupied West Bank, that he was not responsible for any actions his son committed. Please governor,» I calmed down, «if you don't believe me, I'll get you a copy of the newspaper».

The more David Bren, the military governor, saw sadness, frustration and fury, the more his smile broadened on his red face. His eyes laughed happily while his big ears wiggled. David Bren stood up behind his desk. He stretched his hand to shake mine, thus ending the meeting. « I didn't call you to argue with me nor to hear your approval,» he said firmly, after his smile had faded, « I will not shake the hand which will demolish one of my homes », I shouted bitterly, slaming the door angrily in the face of his Nazi practices.

Mukhtar and me ever, went directly to the house of the destitute family to inform them to save what ever they could before their house was demolished. We were met by weeping women and children in their sleeping gowns. The father holding his head between his hands and knees as he squatted on the ruins of his home. He couldn't speak to us. He was whispering to himself, «What I have been building for the last twenty years they have demolished in

seconds. We were given ten minutes to leave the site. They didn't permit us to take anything out ofour home . A heap of chauvanism and hatred, that's what the military governors were. David Bren was the best example. That is why he remained in his position longer than any other governor.

I met David Bren one day in the town square. I had already emptied a shop of its articles with my own hands and with the help of the municipality workers, labourers, sanitary men, garbage collectors and inspectors. An order had been issued to close the doors of that shop with cement and mortar, because the owner was a «terrorist». Helping to save something for the «terrorist» was not easy. So this was my obligation to help my people. I did not care. David Bren came at that moment. He was dancing, really dancing and laughing happily. «You look very happy» I said. «Are you going to demolish his house?» I asked. « Yes, nine houses in Turmus Ayya villages, besides his house », and signalled to the shop. «You are sick, governor », I said vindictively. David Bren, realizing what I meant, corrected himself, « you know today we shot down nine Egyptian Migs

Remembering David Bren is provocative to write about the school of Zionism, a Nazi specimen of the Israeli military establishment. Besides, he was the darling and spoiled child of General Dayan. He always tried to humiliate us and plant the seeds of defeat in our hearts and minds, That was the best way, the Zionists thought, to build their empire: by destroying the spirit of resistance.

One morning, before I left for my office, David Bren phoned me. «Yes, Abdul Jawad speaking, » I answered. «This morning,we will cross to the East Bank of the Jordan without a TASREEH » (permit), he said,and the last word in Arabic. « When are you coming back? » I questioned, hiding the tune of defeat in my voice. « Before noon, but at noon at the latest,» he said in a tune of absolute confidence.

It was during the battle of Karameh, on the twenty first of March, 1968, a few months after the June war of 1967. His confidence was justified. But the Israelis never defeated the Palestinians, not even in 1947-1948 war.

Ninety Palestinians decided to have their first confrontation with the Israeli army. They had done a great job. The Israelis faced a big defeat. Their destroyed tanks with whatever weapons they left behind were exhibited in Amman. That was the first time after 1947. Who defeated the Israelis? A handful of Palestinian fedayeen.

This spark not only lighted the path for the Palestinians to armed struggle, but regained confidence among the Arabs. The Israeli army could be defeated.

Noon passed, two o'clock had passed too,and the Israeli army had not yet come back to its bases.I phoned David Bren, the governor. For the first time I felt the taste of victory. I never felt that we, Palestinians had ever been defeated by military confrontations. It has always been Arab gover-

nments' conspiracies behind our tragic defeats-mainly political. «Abdul Jawad Salih speaking, governor. It seems that they did'nt give you a return Tasreekh" (I pronounced it his way) , I said.

« Well, » he said. But I interrupted, «They (again I stressed the word) say that they destroyed many tanks, killed many soldiers and your helicopters didn't stop lifting your wounded» I told him with a swing of great satisfaction. « Well, they interfered with their bloody noise, » he answered with a tune of defeat.

The worst kind of these hated visits were when they asked for your children. The Palestinian children in the occupied territories have become the men of today and tomorrow. But you don't always know whether our children charged the Israelis a high price for their detention or not. Once they detained Salih and his brother Mahir, my two eldest sons aged fourteen and thirteen years respectively. In fact, they have done nothing against the security of the Israelis because their security is the despotic yoke with which they try to choke the life of the Palestinians in the land of Palestine. They confiscated lands, built settlements in our land. They imposed collective punishment on towns and they detained hundreds of people under the name of their security. What Salih and Mahir had done, all children of the world would do. But the Israelis do not expect our children to be like the children of the world. Neither do they expect their parents to be the mothers and fathers of their children.

Yasmin Luis Awadallah, ten years old, ran away from an Israeli patrol that was chasing a demonstration. She mistakenly thought that the mayor's house was the best refuge and sanctuary for her. The Israelis thought, in turn, that the girl must be the mayor's daughter. This was a good chance for the Fuhrer, David Bren, as we used to call him, to prove that the mayor had always been the instigator of all the demonstrations. My wife came to the rescue of the girl. A struggle ensued in the house, the girl crying and my wife shouting. My two children came to their rescue. Mahir, seeing the girl had fainted, overcame the child in himself and became a lion. He attacked the soldiers fiercely. But Salih, Mahir and their mother were overtaken by the « courageous » soldiers. At the police station they called for the daughter of the mayor of Al-Bireh, but to their disappointment, nobody answered. Unfortunately, I have no daughters.

The military court was ready to receive hundreds of girls and boys who were caught demonstrating. In fact, those who were caught were the most innocent. Among those who were caught, there were two hundred students from Beir Zeit College. They chose to run their own silent demonstrations. They walked silently in fours; no shouting, no slogans. It took the Israeli soldiers only a few minutes to welcome the demonstrators. Once they, the students, reached the local market of Al-Bireh, the Fuhrer, led the attack. The shouting of the students as a natural echo to police clubs disrupted the silence of the demonstration.

The military court worked very hard that week twenty four hours round the clock. It was a mock court. In fact, it was an automatic machine to produce fine tickets. Each student was fined an avarage of fifty to hundred Jordanian dinars. Salih was fined seventy dinars or three months imprisonment, Mahir was fined fifty dinars or three months imprisonment. As agreed among all the students, the two of them announced in court that they would not pay the fine. « We will not pay a single dinar to buy American bombs and phantoms to bomb our brothers », they said courrageously. The judge changed the verdict immediately and announced that if the fine was not paid within three days, their father's property would be confiscated to cover the fine .

More demonstrations broke out ferociously to protest against the Israeli practices. That week had provided the best chance for the fuhrer, David Bren, to satisfy his sadism. During that week, I witnessed two inhumane incidents, which I shall never forget in my whole life. These two occurences greatly influenced my attitude as to the means of our peoples' struggle. Realizing that many of the Al-Bireh seconday school girls had been detained, the day following the trial the students decided to launch a big demonstration. The Israeli army had surrounded the school. They voiced obscene curses to the girls. The girls revolted and started bombarding the soldiers with bottles of soft drinks and stones. The army decided to occupy the school. So they brought a big truck loaded with a big tank full of coloured water. The head mistress phoned me and asked me

to come to school. When I approached the main gate, the hose was directed at me. My clothes turned red. The girly and some teachers opened the gate for me, the soldiers, rushing, followed me and rampaged the school grounds. It was like hundreds of dogs chasing beautiful birds locked in a room. The girls, trying to flee, fell down and the soldiers over them. After hitting them with their guns, the soldiers held the girls from their ponytails and threw them to the other soldiers as if they were playing ball. Some of the girls were thrown over twenty steps of the main entrance of the building to be loaded on jeeps and trucks. I was stunned by the calls of help from the girls frightened to death, their faces deadly pale; they called, « Ammi Abu Saleh », to attract my attention. I followed the call of help jumping from one desk to another trying to block the way of a soldier before he could catch his prey. I was so hausted, beleaguered by the massacre and the massacred that I failed to cope with these calls. I ran madly blking for the Fuhrer. He was standing at the head of the stairs of the main entrance. I shouted at him. I spoke some words which I really can't remember now because it was not I who spoke at that time. But sure he understood exactly what I meant at that time. He saw the urge to kill him in my eyes. He gave his orders to his monsters to stop. They stopped. The feathers of the birds and their books covered the whole ground. The desks, the frames of the beautiful paintings made by the girls and the wall newspaper were all torn. Everybody's heart was broken. The silent and quiet tears of the girls streamed down their beautiful cheeks. They were not

enough to clean the sins of the occupiers. Only guns will.

The three days to pay the fine had come to an end.

The second incident started. The Director of the police department of the occupied territories called me for a meeting. I drove to the police station in my car. The director of the police immediately received me. He read before me the order to confiscate my car. He asked me to hand him the keys. I refused. « There are no laws anywhere under this sun which can impose a fine on the father because his son has committed an offence, » I told him justifying my refusal.

I tried to leave the police station but he refused to let me out.

Meanwhile there were about one hundred and fifty to two hundred women, old and young, striking in the old town mosque. When they heard of my detention, they walked out in a demonstration towards the police station. Most of them came dressed in the Palestinian national dress chanting and singing in the best fashion of European demonstrations. I was so proud of our women who proved to be equal in right to our men. In fact, Palestinian women have proved more conscious of the need for struggle to attain our national rights. They stood infront of the main gate of the police station. « Free the mayor. God is Great ».A few minutes later, the Israeli army arrived. Once the soldiers landed from their trucks, the Fuhrer spoke a few Hebrew words.

Without a warning or a word, the soldiers' clubs, hands and feet went down over the heads of those courageous women. All the women fled away. Mrs. Samiha Khalil, a fifty year old woman, the president of In'ash Al Usra Society in Al-Bireh,did not run. Tall, she walked like a giant, raising her head above the clouds, followed by the Israeli corporal named Elias. He kept hitting her with all his might. When he got tired, he hit her with his gun as if he wanted to humiliate her, oblige her to run. But he couldn't miss this Palestinian mountain. My wife fell down. Five soldiers attacked her. When she told them she was the mayor's wife, the movements of their hands and clubs increased. My sister Nijmeh came to her rescue. She brought a big stone and hit one of the five soldiers.He cried and they followed my sister. My wife was saved from the continued agony. Nijmeh (star) fell down. The soldiers followed her. She spat in the cowards' faces. « If you are not cowards, let each one fight me alone ». The street was now like a deserted battlefield. Shoes, shawls and other women'sccessories were left in the street.

I watched the whole scene from the second floor of the police station. When I tried to run to the rescue of the demonstrators, they stopped me. Helpless, I stood like a wounded monster. It is useless to confront these cowards with peaceful demonstrations. We have to fight with guns.

I was released for a few hours until twelve o'clock that same day when armoured cars, jeeps and about a hundred soldiers besieged my home. The soldiers

first silenced our small white dog which Salih had won in a game of jars. Blind folded, each participant in the game would get his prize hidden in the jar which he was supposed to break. The rest of the game, I think, is known. They killed it because it couldn't stop barking. All of our family was sad for him. The kids wept the victim and with the other kids of our Hara (area) gave him a suitable funeral.

About twenty to thirty Israeli soldiers conquered my home. They searched everything. They turned every page of every book in my library. They dug their hands in every sack looking for dynamite. They opened the bags and closets. They did not find anything illegal or against their security except myself. They took me encircled by soldiers to « protect » me from the hands of my weeping and shouting children. My wife shouted, « Remember each of his six children will be a fedayee to revenge his father. I will be a fedayee too ».

There were two well chosen interrogators with faces made of rubber and glasssed eyes awaiting me. It is impossible to grasp any impression of life on their faces. They were sitting behind a table on which there were three dishes of sandwiches and three cups of tea. The cell two meters long by one meter and a half wide was heated with two kerosine heaters. Outside, the sky was was weeping snow. Al-Bireh is very cold in winter. I was well dressed, not quality wise, for my dress ever since the occupation was only haki and has never been changed since. I had a coat of our lamb fur. Palestinian shepherds and old people wear it.

They started to ask me the usual questions: name, age etc... I tried to smoke my pipe but one of them asked me to stop. I put my pipe back in my pocket. He showed me a photo of mine hiding what was written around it. « Whose photo is this? », he asked « Mine », I answered. « This is a photo of your identity card of a terrorist organization we found with a « terrorist » we captured. You are asked to tell us in detail your connections with it, » he ordered. I laughed for I knew this photo was picked from Ha'alam Hazeh magazine. But I didn't tell him so. « Don't laugh. This is not a joke », he said. « I don't belong to any political organization. Mind you they are not terrorists. They are fedayeen », I said. He became furious. « Then what are you? Who are you? » He questioned angrily. I felt he wanted me to answer him, « I am a mayor », but I didn't. « I am Abdul Jawad Salih » I said. « What are you? » he asked again. « A human being », I said. « shit, he said outraged.

« Look; you represent a government. A cup flows from what it contains ». The second interrogator interfered. He offered me cold tea and some sandwiches. I declined. He told me that I could smoke my pipe. I refused. « Mr. Abdul Jawad, we know that you are a respectable man. You try to serve your people. What we ask of you is just to pick the telephone and tell the governor whenever there is going to be a demonstration in town and to tell him who the instigators are,» he said in a quiet gentle tone. « As simple as that, you are asking me to be an Israeli agent. Are you aware of what you are

asking? » I said stunned. « This isin the interests of your town and your own people,» he said avoiding my question. « How, for heaven's sake? » I questioned. « If you inform us that Hasan is Fateh or Jamal is a member of the P.F.L.P., he will not be able to put a bomb somewhere. It is true we shall put him in prison for a short time, but we will not demolish his house or the house he is living in. You see, you serve your town. » He seemed sure and convinced of what he said. « Look, both of you. To cut it short, I refuse to be an agent not only for Nasser (he was still alive), but believe me I refuse to work as an agent for God, » I said firmly using my hands to emphasize my point. The first interrogator got sick of me and interrupted by slamming the table. « Stand up,» he ordered. I stood up. « Take off your clothes,» he ordered. I took off my coat and stopped. « I say take off all your clothes,»he ordered again. I refused by not taking off any. He called a number of soldiers. I didn't try to resist them. They took off all my clothes except my pants.

« Take him to hill,» he ordered his soldiers. I thought a new ordeal of torture would start in the same prison I had visited. In fact I was the first among all the mayors of the occupied territories who visited our patriots in the prisons and launched campaigns of solidarity for Palestinian war prisoners and detainees. I had seen by my own eyes the traces of torture on the prisoners. In fact, that was recorded in the prison book. I had, too, protested the killings in Israeli prisons of Palestinian free - dom fighters , who passed away under torture. I was aware of all their methods of torturing I was.

now the victim. Life is strange. For a fighter it is the strangest but the richest.

The soldiers led my way out of the cell. « Stand here ». I stood between the main buiding of the prison and the Jordanian stable. It was still snowing. I could hardly see the soldiers who were guarding me from the heavy clouds. I felt my toes and fingers freezing. I started to jump in place to compensate for the absence of heat. Then I started to chant syllables from a poem sung by three leaders of the 1936-1939 revolution before they were executed. Then I started to shout, « Down with Zionism! Down with the occupiers! » I didn't know for how long I stayed. I lost the sense of time. They called me in. « Have you brought your bag with you? » one asked. « Have you got Jordanian Dinars with you? » the dirtiest exclaimed. « No, but why? » I wondered. « You will be deported . Let's go », said both of them.

I was shocked. Deportation was the sharpest sword hung over our necks. « Look, you could lock me behind these bars for life. You could kill me here in my own town, but you can never deport me for the simple reason that I will resist deportation untill death ». « O.K., no time for lectures. We will see,» they retarted .They led me through the corridors of the Tagart building where the prison and the headquarters of the governor are located. I met the Fuhrer, David Bren, on my way. I frowned and neither of us said goodmorning. We left the compound and continued to the outer main gate.

There I didn't find any jeeps waiting. I looked at my guard, wondering. « Go », he ordered. « Where? » I asked. « Go home », he said. I ran happily like a bird freed from his prison. Unbelieving, I ran without looking behind me, though it struck me that they might shoot me in the back pretending that I had run away. But I didn't care. This end would be my choice. Isn't that strange? Our love for the land of Palestine is a fact. It is so deep a fact, and a passion more than anything in this life of ours which the Israelis have made so difficult, so complex and inhuman.

I ran, ran, trotting, dancing to the nearest house. Dr. Tobassi's wife opened the door. She couldn't believe her eyes when she saw me. Neither did I. I phoned my wife and told her the good news.

Still I hadn't paid the fine. I knew all parents were detained until they paid their fines.

Next night at twelve o'clock the locusts came. « I haven't seen you for a long time », I said. They didn't wait too long. I was sure that they would call again, so I remained dressed.

The same ordeal took place with two new interrogators but with the same qualities. Again they proposed working for them. « What about you working with me. I will pay double », I suggested. That was the only way to stop the subject from being raised again.

Meanwhile, Mr. Yarring, a member of our council, as he was called, for he had good contacts with the Israelis, told the council that the mayor would be deported unless he paid the fine. The problem was solved. Some of my relatives and friends collected

the amount and the fine was paid. I was released next morning in the same way I had been released the day before.

The knocks on the three doors increased. The ringing of the bell had not stopped for a minute. I lit up or lighted up the room, and walked through the corridor leading to the main gate of the house.

I remember when one of their agents came to my office and informed me that Mahir was responsible for killing two Israeli soldiers guarding one of the Israeli Banks in the town.

I laughed. « Tell them to play another game. I already know their ways to pressure me ». I told himu.

Well, while I was opening the gate, I thought that they came that night to detain Mahir (my eldest son was completing his university studies in Cairo then). More than twenty soldiers flocked into the house, each occupying a place in most of the rooms. « Mr. Mayor, the military governor wants to ask you a few questions. Get dressed and accompany us. It will take less than an hour and you will come back ». Captain Maurice, an Iraqi Jew, who was a foxy typical intelligence officer.

I Went to my room to get dressed, Captain Jacob followed me. « Hurry,Hurry! » he said. That was the first time I Saw captain, but he was famous for his dirty tongue. Mahir asked him to keep quiet and be polite. I stopped Mahir. I kissed my wife and my children farewell. « Yaba, the Israelis are taking me. I don't know for how long. But remember that you should always fight them », I said.

Alaa my youngest son, then three years old, asked me to come back. « I will, Yaba », I told him hugging him more than the rest.

■ ■ ■

They led me through the tortorous path of my crucifixion. Fifty meters from my home they parked the car. Major Moshe a Moroccan Jew, who was supposed to be the second man after the governor, was of no authority at all. In fact, Captain Ellan who was a Polish Jew was more influential and had more authority than this Major. All Arab Jews were considered second class, in relation to European Jews despite their ranks. Major Moshe spoke a few words. Immediately the two soldiers surrounding me and blind-folded me.

I followed the path of pain through all my senses except my sight which they blocked. I knew every town, every piece repaired or underrepair all the way. After an hour or so I knew I reached Allenby Bridge. « Wouldn't you like to go to the toilet? » a voice asked. « No Major Zeppin, I don't feel like it ». I had recognized his voice. He had once been the intelligence officer in our town and he has the best memory I know. Whenever I raised the problem of a prisoner he would tell me his history without going to his records. « I am not Major Zeppin » he said. « You are » I replied, still blind folded. « O.K. get out of the car! » he ordered.

The car was a small two-door type. When I realized that they would deport me through the bridge, I stretched my legs to the end front and fixed my back to the rear seat. Four soldiers tried to draw me by force out of the car. They couldn't. They stung me with their poisonous hands. « Look, you should know that you will not be able to deport me unless I am dead or unconscious », I told them firmly. That was my promise to my people and to my good earth. I started chanting very loudly:

O my country!! O my country!!
I sacrifice my blood for you
I donate my life to you
Just be safe
O my country.

Silence prevailed after they had failed to get me out. again they started driving. I think they chose another place where people couldn't be witnesses. I decided to kill at least those who took the responsibility of deporting me. If I killed myself with them, hell with it, I thought.

I planned it. When I felt that the two soldiers sitting on my left and right on the rear seat had slept I was ready to do it.

After locating exactly where the driver's head was, once by raising my head and after by slumping into the chair, I hit his head hard with my left foot and the steering with my right foot. The driver lost control and the car went astray to a barren land off the road.

The three of them jumped over me. They thought I was able to fly through the windows. The two guards tied my hands under theirs and put their legs over mine. I didn't utter a single word. I was stunned by the deportation decision Nothing was worth while any more, not even my life.

However, I wondered, « Suppose they were killed but I was injured or perhaps paralized. What would be the use?! »

I abandoned the idea. keep struggling against the state of Israel. This is the solution of the crux of our strategy.

But why, why should they deport me? Can't they realize how much I am attached not only to my family, my children but to my people, young boys of my town, the students, the laborors, the farmers, and the educated ones. Even the rich people of my town whom I dealt with, regardless of their influence, respected me and apreciated the way I ran the municipality. Couldn't they understand what the reaction of these people whom I served honestly, day and night, confronting the Israelis themselves for their sake? Couldn't they imagine how much trouble I would create for them inside and outside the occupied territories?

Well, the Israelis after the October war of 1973 lost their ability of reasoning power. Besides, the war opened the greatest and the widest door of hope. Israel's defeat is imminent; But we need to struggle.. This is what happened. Armed struggle

ensued and increased for two months after the October war more than any time in a quarter of a century.

They must check this progressive attitude among the people. They will take repressive measures to subdue the people to ensure their existence. For our existence as a political entity is contradictory to theirs. Our existence is the antithesis of their existence.

But why you?

Don't make a fool of your self. Do you still remember the last warning you received from the General Governor of the West Bank and the local governor. « This is our last warning for you. You write every word which I shall dictate. You have been involved in activities inside and outside the jurisdiction of your municipality which we consider as a violation and threat to our security ».

You spoilt for them a big bargain of two thousand dunums. In doing so you broke part of the belt around Jerusalem. On the personal level you stood against the Armenian Bishop Shahi Ajamyan who was a personal friend of General Dayan and maybe his partner. Moreover, you united the divided villagers and encouraged them to challange the land-lord and the authorities-you have planted the seeds of the peasant revolution.

Remember, too, what you have done in Beit Siera Village. It is not the agricultural cooperative you

have created there which only bothered their expansionist policy. You were building a human challenge to their mere existence. When they built kibutz Horon on the site of the three villages of Amwas, Yalo and Beit Nuba they had put in mind that this kibutz will swallow,also, Beit Siera and Beit Liqya to encircle the environs of Jerusalem.

When you stood fast against the pressures put by the colonizers of Horon. Then you stopped their infringements: as when they captured all the men and women of Beit Siera, the killing of their sheep and cows. What you have done had spoilt their schemes. The colonizers of Horon aimed to drive away the people of Beit Siera « voluntarily » not by razing to the ground the village as they have done to the three villages.

I am sure that you will never forget the young people, girls and boys, doctors,labourers,whom you have helped unit under the banner of voluntary work-a movement which you helped to create in other villages and other towns of the occupied territories, you were, infact, creating and building your people on a new progressive base-a people that not only could confront the Zionist challenge, but one that can create the symptoms of its defeat.

The car was running at top speed. Now I smelled phosphate emanating from the mountains edging the Dead Sea. The hands and legs of the two guards, which they used to fetter mine, have relaxed their pressure. I realized that they had slept. I decided to trouble them. As long as I could not sleep why should they?

I withdrew my hands and legs and freed them quickly. They jumped again over me.

« For heaven's sake. I'll suffocate from the kufeya you covered my face with ». I said giving an excuse to remove it from over my nose inorder that I might be able to sneak a look to know where they were driving me.

They refused and kept it all the way.

I surrendered again to myself to continue the dialogue.

Well, politically you were a thorn in their throats, and the biggest block in the path of the Zionist scheme. Remember the meeting held in Jerusalem after the massacres of Amman against our people. The meeting was attended by all the influential mayors and the traditional leaders of the occupied territories of 1967, when all of them agreed to announce the separation of the West Bank from the East Bank and Al-Jaa'bari brought the Quran to let everybody swear that he would be faithful to this decision. Ofcourse Al-Jaabari was encouraged by the Israelis after the Palestinian revolution declared Jarash area as a liberated district. Jaabari's plan was a first step toward annexing the West Bank to Israel. Then simply you raised your voice and told the whole meeting that was a dangerous step against the Palestinian revolution and a threat to the future of our cause. Jaabari then turned back the Quran. The meeting was a failure.

Do you think the Israelis will ever forget this for you? Don't think that this caused the failure of civil rule or administration which was and still is a Zionist scheme?

Remember your confrontation with the settlers who came to colonize part in the north of the city of Al-Bireh:

What are you doing here?

We want to settle down here?

But this is not your land to settle on!

Yes, it is, as Jews all the land of Palestine is ours.

Do you mean to tell me that your religion permits you to confiscate the land of others?

Yes, but we are ready to compensate you.

This is not mine. It belongs to the citizens of my town.

O. K. Go bring them. We will discuss conpensating them.

No.I 'll bring them to bury you in this spot. I advise you to leave immediately. We will never permit you to settle here.

Then fighting between you had ended because of the interference ofthe journalists who were present there which stopped bloodshed.

Do you believe that the settlers come anywhere accidently and with-out government planning? Don't you think that the agent who informed you about the settlers had been told to do so? The presence of the journalists (most of them must be intelligence officers), and the presence of an American embassy officer had been planned to check your reaction to future settlement of your area. Anyway you succeeded perfectly in giving them a Palestinian reaction.

Do you remenber the many press and T. V. interviews for the Jewish and International mass media and through these interviews that you uncovered the mask of what is called Israeli democracry.

How many times you were warned by the military governor not to give press interviews. Of course you defied all these orders.

Telegrams. They must have a big file of your protesting teleprams which created big and scandalous issues. Remember that the demolition of the three villages which they planned nobody could hear about.

Oh, that telegram you sent to Dayan about Abu Znaymeh concentration camp which was opened for whole families. Mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters of any suspected freedom fighter were detained and tortured. You reminded Dayan of Aucharitz Camp when you compared Abu Znaymeh with it. The camp, became a scandal and was closed later

Didn't you defy Dayan, the god, Remember when he closed the village of Bit Sahur from which the fedayyen launched rockets on some targets in Jerusalem. To help its people stand the collective punishment imposed on them, depriving all to go to their work for about two months, you sent a big truck loaded with food for the village. This has become a tradition of all other municipalities to victims of such policy . . . . Don't forget the military order which became the law of Abdul Jawad Salih, as the military governor told you, when he gave you a copy of the order.

Another military order named after me reflects the degeneration of the Israeli military establishment and its administration in the occupied territories. The military governors, headed by the defence minister formed a « cartel » to monopolise our poeple , « the locals ».They worked behind the screen of some agents. The most audacious among them is Janho, Abdul Nur Khalil Janho, a citizen of Ramallah. Janho established a new factory with other Jewish partner for filling and distributing butane gas. The price and weight of each bottle was fixed by a military order. But Janho used to charge higher rates des pite the protests of the consumers. I raised the problem to the police and then to the military governor. Both asked for a specific coplaint. Nobody was ready tocomplaingainst Dayan, the local governor or against Janho (later this audacious agent killed a Palestinian and critically wounded another).

I decided to present a complaint.Isent the police station my letter of complaint signed by me as a citizen. Few hours later, I was called by the military governor who notified me of the new military order. They had legalized the prices of Janho.

I laughed sarcastically. The military governor asked me why I was laughing.

« You know » I said, « We have a proverb which says: 'The worst catastrophe is the one which causes laughter.' » I continued, « to issue such an order needs a long procedure. It seems that Janho and his « company » are very influential.»

Talking about the defiance of Dyan, the myth, who after his last meeting with you had been contracted. For this meeting which was attended by Israeli journalists proved that the myth, the superman, could be provoked to reveal the arrogance and aggressive attitudes of his military establishment.

« General, I believe that you are forcing the municipality to demonstrate for the expansion of the reunion of families' scheme. »

« Mayor, If you demonstrate I will send you the paratroopers ». Full stop.

Then you turned to another subject: « General, when you annexed Jerusalem, part of Al-Bireh municipal boundaries were annexed too. You know, General, local and international law doesn't permit that as long as our municipality is functioning ».

« Mr. Mayor. We are here », he nervously said and started speaking English instead of Hebrew.

« You mean by force, General? » I said in English but coldly.

« Yes, and you have to live as such for the next fifty years ». Dayan said while the interpreter and the journalists looked attentively.

« Look, General. Two thousand years ago there was a jewish state but it whithered away within hundred years. You should remember that he who laughs best laughs last.

He didn't reply. Instead, « Mr. Mayor, excuse me I have an appointment in Jerusalem.»

Disappointed, the general left without drinking his coffee

It is true the setting of the meeting might have provoked him too, as the red colour provokes a bull. A grand picture of Jerusalem on top of a map of Palestine embroidered by Palestinian mothers decorated the background of the mayor's desk.

The arrogant Dayan being humiliated , must have decided revenge by deporting you.

In fact, since that meeting and until your deportation all the meetings with the governor had been cancelled.

The enemies of light could not stop the rays of the morning sun even with their blind fold

By that time we should have crossed the whole south of Palestine. I was not drowsy but thirsty.

The car stopped and my heart with it, again I heard the voice of Major Zeppin.

« Now get out of the car », he ordered.

« Don't ever dream of it » I replied firmly.

Three or four soldiers got inside the car. But I had already glued my feet in the front of the car and my back to the rear seat. They tried hard. I tried to remove the fold. But they rushed, their fingers hitting deep inside my eyes. Sparks like rockets launched from my eyes. It seemed as if they were afraid of my eyes. I started to hit fiercely anybody who dared trying to hold my hands. The battle inside the car took five, ten, fifteen minutes, I don't know. I was emphasising my ability to resist, I felt it limitless, until a soldier held my right foot, twisted it and hit my right leg against the edge of the window.

Then others helped him. They took it and bent it against the same edge with their best ability. They dealt with my leg as with a log of wood. Others handled my left leg but in the opposite direction. Two thirds of my body was out of the car. My two hands clung with the railing (frame) of the front seat. I then freed my two legs by hitting hard at anyone could reach.A treacherous soldier went from behind and through the driver's door hit my hand with his bayonet. My hands betrayed me involuntarily. I fell on the white desert sand.

The whole of my body was stretched as if etherized by the new crucifiers.I saw two soldiers holding fetters in their hands. My hands and feet were transferred into arrows based on a revolving base. The ability and the strength of the human body is immeasurable. They were more than thirty soldiers but they couldn't reach me. Lastly, all of them jumped over my body. They nailed me to my cross.

After they fettered my hands legs they held me up like a lamb in a slaughter house. One held me by the chain of hand fetters, the second from the middle of my, belt and the third by the fetters of the leg. I felt that my legs would be separated from my feet for the plastic fetters acted as a saw.

I started shouting:

« If you have anything against me why don't you send me to a military court.

Down with the new Nazism

Down with Zionism »

Then I started singing and chanting any syllable of patriotic poems and ballads.

Then the three soldiers threw my body on the floor of an armoured car which was waiting. My head was covered with my fur coat.

I heard somebody saying. « Maybe they killed somebody ». I looked up, I saw seven pale faces as if frightened by the future, but very familiar to me. Two of them from my own town. One is the president of the labour Union in our town, the other a teacher, a lawyer from Jerusalem, another from Nablus and two traders from Nablus, and president of the Medical Association.

« Our brother Abu Salih », all of them shouted.
« Good morning, brother » I saluted them.

The armoured car, loaded with eight deportees; crossed the desert towards the east leaving behind a tail of sand. To me it represented a trail of strong memories, deep emotions and sincere and faithful love for Palestine.

The armoured car was followed by many others loaded with soldiers. I couldn't see them because I was still lying fettered on the floor of the armoured car. But my comrades wondered why all that force. Were they scared of unarmed men. Yes they were.

Major Zeppin climbed the armoured car and opened a piece of paper. « This is an order of your deportation, I will read it for you », he said.

« Listen, Usurpers of my land have no right to deport its people. You Nazis », I shouted.
« Mr. Mayor... » he said.
« I shall never leave my land under any circumstances, You cowards. If I have done anything wrong send me to court, your military court. You understand!! ».

« Mr. Mayor... » he said, but was interrupted.
« Hell with you. You can't think that you are doing a dirty crime. What about our families, our children. Don't you have a family? » I was shouting.

« Mr. Mayor, I am executing orders. You know that ».

« Yes, I know too, that Eichman executed orders. He was later caught and was condemmed to death, too, for executing these orders ».
« Mr. Mayor, you have disappointed me » he said.
« Why, Major, Oh, No, Colonel? Of course you had inflicted so much suffering on our people, so they promoted you. Why Colonel? »

« You are behaving like a teenager, Mr. Major ».

« You son of a... (I didn't like to complete it). You came yesterday from Poland. You have nothing to do with Palestine more than a Pakestani does. I was born in Palestine. My great grand ancestor was born in Palestine. Yesterday, Colonel, I was planting trees in the streets of Al-Bireh. The day before yesterday I was cleaning Al-Ama'ri refugees camp, and before that I was working with the farmers of Burham village. My body smells of the dust of the land of Palestine, and you are deporting me from my land and still you want me to behave with you like a gentleman».

With all my strength I hit him on his chest with my two fettered feet. He fell down. One of his soldiers attacked me with his bayonet. « You are a coward. You can't do it » I tried to provoke him.

But Colonel Zeppin ordered the soldier to stop at the right time. He didn't hit.

My comrades interfered. One of them begged: « For heaven's sake let's go. If they kill us here not even a bird will be a witness to their crime».

I felt I was not free. My decision would influence the lives of others. Looking at their pale faces, dusted with the goodwhite sand of Palestine they looked like ghosts. My face must have looked pale with the agony I was passing through.

I felt I must acquiesce to my comrades' appeal. I did. « Colonel Zeppin. Tell General Vardi (the General Governor of the West Bank) that I admit now that I had committed the biggest mistake in the whole of my life during the last seven years. That was I didn't build or create an armed people to fight you. It is now the only solution to deal with you. And I promise him to forbid him to pass through the streets of Al-Bireh ».(His head-quarters are located north of our city). I shouted.

I crossed the demarcation line which was planted by barbed wires shouldered with the responsibility of fomenting all sorts of fighting and means of struggle against Zionism.

We wondered for three or four hours in the desert. We lost the way-ironically our way. It was an empty wilderness. Nothing. We wished we could see a bird to give us the sense and existence of life. Walking in the desert, exactly in Wadi Araba, is very difficult. Your feet dive in the heart of the sand and you need great effort to get them out of it.

Exhausted, we surrendered to rest. Ishould note here « Israeli Humanity ». They provided each one

with two sandwiches, one apple, a plastic pot of coloured water - (they call it tea) - and a small flag of a white sheet of plastic-durable surrender. We have a saying describing this « humanity »: sprinkling salt on a wound.

Once we crossed the « borders », the Israeli Cabinet announced that eight « terrorists » were deported because they constituted a security hazard to the State of Israel. So a Jordanian patrol was ordered to look for us. After about four hours we saw it. We signalled to it. They picked us up. They took me to a clinic and treated my wound. « Sorry, we can't stitch it because time has passed. It will leave a mark on you hand, in fact a medal ».

« What shall we do? » One of us asked. « We will go to the International Red Cross », one answered. « What will it do? » I asked. « Nothing ». Another answered.

The best thing to do is to go back and try to cross the bridge peacefully » I suggested « They will kill you. » One warned. « So what? It will not be easy for them. Our death will be recorded, at least, » I said.

Demonstrations already broke out in Al-Bireh and its twin city of Ramallah. Petitions from all over the occupied territories protesting our deportation had been sent to the Israelis.

In the morning of our third day of deportation we were the first to cross the bridge. Each one of us, with his placard, pushed his way. The Israeli sol-

diers were shocked with surprise. They didn't know what to do, then they tried to push us back by force. A battle between us ensued. Jeryes was pushed back and fell. I hit the one who pushed Jeryes and opened the way for Arabi and Abu Hijleh. The three of us reached again the land of Palestine. I kissed her and the three of us planted ourselves in her heart. Muhsin went back a few steps to hold a microphone. He presented our cause, the Palestinian cause, the best way a lawyer could. While talking passionately he wept, and made all our people weep.

The Israelis gave an ultimatum to the Jordanians through the United Nations. In turn the Jordanian head of intelligence asked us to withdraw within half an hour. We were thinking of remaining on the bridge, striking in hunger, until they permitted us to go back to our families. Unfortunately the Jordanian authorities did not permit us to do that.

Our demonstration on the bridge had tremendous results. The pioneering spirit of attempting to go back to our land, to our homes and to our people had sparked a daring spirit in the occupied territories not only of 1967 but those of 1948. It shook even the conscience of free and honest Jews who protested our deportation in many ways. The demonstrations gained momentum and spread all over the cities and villages of Palestine. These demonstrations subsided only after twenty one days and because of heavy rains.

Our deportation in fact opened a new stage in the struggle of our people. The path of mass revolution

has been fermenting since then.

The Zionists have not yet paid the price for the crime of deportation.

Philosophically, deportation is not only a matter of uprooting human beings from their families, children, and friends.Neither is it uprooting them from either their jungle or paradise, but uprooting them from their life choice.

Politically, deportation is practiced by the Zionist State of Israel to get rid of the political leaders of their communities. They deport leaders of the grocering, educational, labour, student, women and municipal institutions, too, to create a leaderless minority of Arabs. Through a well planned conspiracy they try to keep the Arabs as a minority of unskilled labour to serve their shortage of labour (advisable to study Koenings report which shows Zionist type of thinking).

This explains the huge number of deportees who have already been deported mainly from the occupied West Bank. Out of nearly about 600,000 inhabitants they had deported 1560 leaders of their communities. Objectively speaking, most of those who were deported have never been involved in politics. Nearly most of them are educated or professional Palestinians, honest and faithful to their professions. They will never in any way constitute any security hazard to the State of Israel or to any state.

Comparatively speaking, the number of deportees to the number of the inhabitants, deportation of Palestinains is a predetermined policy of genocide.

It is not my intention to lecture before anybody. I wanted to present my personal case which doesn't only represent my own tragedy but the dilemma of a people. This is part of it.

Exactly on the fortieth day of deportation my father died. Since I was deported he enclosed himself within the overwhelming pain of losing his only son, most of the mayors of the West Bank asked the General Governor of the Occupied Territories to permit me bid my father farewell and attend his funeral. They wrote him that they, too, would be responsible for my voluntary exile. Still, the Israeli authorities refused the mayors' request. This might look to readers of English as not important. To us it is very very important. In fact, in ordinary circumstances, it is a shame if you don't attend your father's funeral.

Mahir, my beloved son, the tall and young boy became the head of our family after my deportation and his grand father's death. He couldn't wait for few days to get the final results of his high school exams. Mahir wanted to see and meet his father. Unfortunately, it was a very short visit. On the fourth day of his visit Mahir not having reached his 20th birthday, was killed by the Israelis in Tall Zaatar camp. All his blood watered the thirsty soil of Tall Zaatar. Part of his flesh enriched the soil with the flavour of martyrdom. I didn't weep. I never did for him. It is very strange. When my father died I wept aloud like a small child. But when Mahir's coffin was raised on the arms of the fighters

I clapped as if Mahir had won the prize of distinction. His mother, the devoted wife, the faithful daughter of Palestine, chanted a zaghroudeh of pride and dingnity, not a lip chant, but one from the depth of her heart.

Again the ugly Israeli despotism hung over our souls. Mahir stayed among us neither dead nor alive for four days waiting for a decision from the military authorities to be buried in his birth place. He was denied this human right. Is there still humanity within the hearts of human beings??

One day will come, no might whether on earth or in heaven will deprive of us that day when Mahir will go to Palestine freely and without green permit. The Americans might be able to postpone that day. The Israelis and the Arab Zionists might, too, be able to kill thousands of more Palestinian Mahirs in order to postopone that day. But that day very , very soon will come.

Alaa'i, my youngest child, the youngest and a spoilt, four years old, asked his mother one cold, barren night, « Mother, haven't we painted our home for my father to come? Why hasn't he come? What should we do for him to make him come?..

He will come one day.
I promise you Alaa'i, my son, I will come to you.

I promise
Alaa'i my son
I promise I will come

To you, to Palestine
Infiltrating the barbed wires
During night or midday
Holding my bomb and a gun
I will come
To you Alaa'i, my son
To you,
To Palestine I'll come.
Creeping or swimming
At sunrise or at dawn
I'll come
If the Arab assassins
The Zionists or Fascists
If on the way
They do not stop and kill me
I'll come to you son
to Palestine.
Alla'i my son
I promise you
And the young children
Of Palestine,
That I will come
Riding the wind
And the ray of the sun
I'll come to you, my son

To Palestine. Nothing, nothing, son. Will stop the son. Of Palestine. To come to you, to Palestine. I will ride the impossible. I'll block the sun. I'll shut the wind. But to Palestine I'll come. To you my son. To Palestine. I'll come.

Cover Picture : « Statue of Freedom »

This Statue of Freedom was erected in the summer of 1973 in the occupied West Bank town of al-Bireh . The Zionist occupation authorities ordered its removal within a 24 -- hour period . The statue represented a threat to the security of the state , and when the al -- Bireh municipality refused to obey the order , the statue was forcibly removed .

1977

Published by:

P.L.O.
Unified Information
Foreign Information Department
Beirut — Lebanon
B.P. 195 168

Israel expels eight Arabs

JERUSALEM. Dec. 10

SEVEN RESIDENTS of the West Bank and one from East Jerusa - lem were to -- day expelled to Jordan by the Israeli authorities.

The eight were charged with incitement with a view to undermining security, law and order and for advocating co-operation with the Palestine guerilla organisations, Most prominent among them is Abed El-Muhsein Abu Messayer, a Jerusalem lawyer and member of the Moslem Supreme Council who is charged with incitement and with having called for support for the Palestine guerilla organisations and for revolt against and resistance to the Israeli authorities. He was deported for several months in 1967 for incitement to rebellion.

Also Abed El - Gawad Saleh Mayor of El-Birah, a small town near Jrusalem) , who is allegect tohave tried to organise support for the Palestine organisations and opposition and resisiance against the Israeil authorities.

Published by:

P.L.O.
Unified Information
Foreign Information Department
Beirut — Lebanon
B.P. 195 168

59 856